

Luis Munoz Morales

Puerto Rican Jurist

The U.S. Census Bureau continually strives to ensure an accurate count of the people of the United States. For this reason, it has always embraced the hiring of a diverse workforce that is representative of the local communities. In the middle of the 19th century, the United States expanded west into areas formerly governed by Spain and Mexico. Since many of the citizens and local officials only spoke Spanish, the Census Office quickly realized that it needed to employ workers fluent in the language. The establishment of a permanent Census Bureau in 1903 and increased immigration from Cuba and Central and South America expanded the need for Spanish-speaking employees both in the field and at headquarters.

Luis Munoz Morales was born on March 3, 1865, in Cayey, Puerto Rico, to Manuel Munoz Bowin and Dolores Morales Ochoa. After attending primary school and earning his undergraduate degree at the Colegio de los Padres Jesuitas in Santurce, Puerto Rico, Luis travelled to Spain where he earned his law degree in 1886.



Luis Munoz Morales’ passport application photo, 1924

DEPARTAMENTO DE COMERCIO Y TRABAJO OFICINA DEL CENSO CENSO DÉCIMOTERCERO DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS: 1910—POBLACIÓN PUERTO RICO									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
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51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100

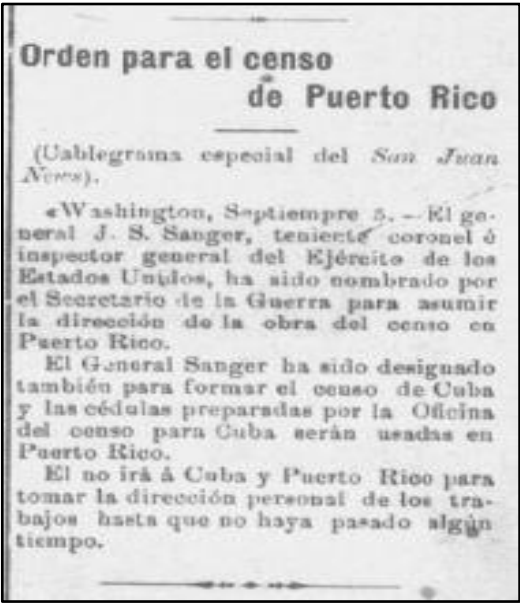
Historic census records are maintained and released by the National Archives and Records Administration, not the U.S. Census Bureau.

Visit <http://www.archives.gov> for more information about publicly available records like the one shown here.

Morales’ 1910 Census

The beginning of Luis’ professional career coincided with an increased drive for Puerto Rican autonomy. In 1868, the people of Lares rose up against Spanish rule, which led to reforms such as the abolition of slavery in 1873. As the 19th century wore on, increased unrest prompted Spain to grant Puerto Rico autonomy in November of 1897. One of the key members of the autonomy movement, Luis Munoz Rivera, leader of the Union/Federalist party, was Luis Morales’ cousin, and father of the first democratic governor of Puerto Rico.

While in Spain, Luis married Marcela Retuerto Rodriguez, of Valladolid, on April 14, 1888. After receiving his doctorate in philosophy and arts from the Universidad Central de Madrid in 1887, Luis returned to Puerto Rico to practice law. Luis settled in his native Cayey, where he served as district attorney and mayor from 1893 to 1895. In 1895, Luis also became a public notary.



La Democracia (San Juan, Puerto Rico) September 14, 1899

Following the momentum of the movement and the example of his family, Luis was an ardent Puerto Rican patriot—he led the Union party in Cayey. In 1898, the town elected him to the short-lived autonomous legislature. When the United States went to war with Spain in 1898, many Puerto Ricans saw a chance to increase their self governance. After the United States gained control of the island, the new government conducted a census to gain an accurate picture of the territory. As the search for competent and local supervisors went underway, Luis quickly surfaced as a choice for supervisor. With his dedication to his community and significant work experience and education, Luis’ qualifications made him a prime candidate for the post.

AUTONOMOUS GOVERNMENT FOR PORTO RICO

By Señor Luis Muñoz Morales, San Juan, formerly Judge of the District Court, Guayama, Porto Rico

A very superficial observation of the tendencies of opinion in general, not only in Porto Rico, but also in the United States, will show the unanimity with which it has been declared, in an express or implied manner, that the present status of this island cannot be maintained any longer, as it is a status which differs greatly from all precedents heretofore known and is in open conflict with the most rudimentary principles of public law. It presents us to the world as a political entity of a strange nature and vested with a purely imaginary citizenship.

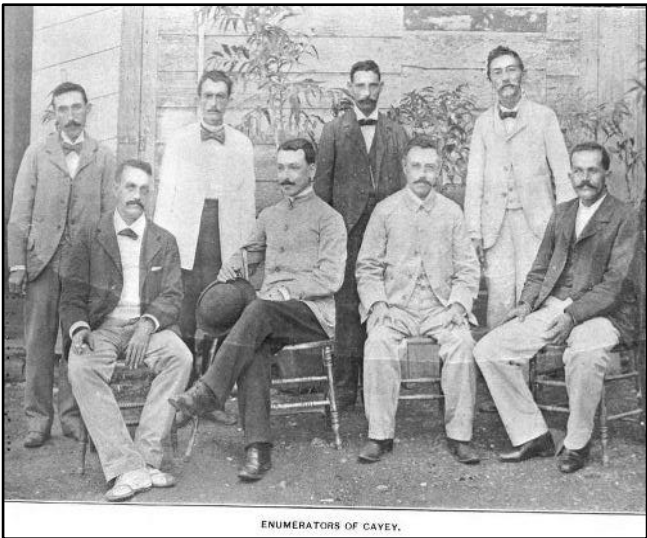
Journal of Race Development (January 1911) Vol. 1, No. 3



1899 Census of Puerto Rico

The United States War Department, which had charge of the governance of Puerto Rico, also spearheaded the 1899 Puerto Rican census. The War Department hired Harrison Dingman, an experienced census taker who supervised the enumeration of the District of Columbia in 1890 and 1900, to spearhead the process. Dingman travelled to Puerto Rico, where he assigned and trained the supervisors. Luis’ responsibilities as supervisor started with the division of his department, Guayama, into 96 enumeration districts, for which he then had to hire, train, and supervise enumerators and agents. As the census returns came in, Luis reviewed them for accuracy before forwarding them to the census headquarters in San Juan. Finally, Luis received cash from the War Department disburser in order to pay his enumerators, agents and expenses. Enumeration for both population and agricultural surveys commenced on November 10, 1899, and finished on December 20—exactly according to schedule, despite the after-effects of both the Spanish-American War and a particularly disastrous August hurricane.

After his successful work with the census, Luis continued with his career in public service and law. He served as a school administrator in 1905, and later as the president of the school board in Cayey.



Luis, left, and the enumerators of Cayey in 1899

In 1906, Luis joined the Board of Trustees of the University of Puerto Rico school system. From 1907 to 1910, Luis sat on the bench as judge for the District Court of Guayama. In addition to writing dozens of books about law, Luis also held a membership with the American Bar Association, and served as president of the Association of Puerto Rican Lawyers in 1914 and of the Puerto Rico Bar Association in 1917. During this time, he also served on the legal advisory board to the governor, Arthur Yager, who ushered through the Jones-Shafroth Act, which conferred U.S. citizenship to the residents of Puerto Rico born after April 25, 1898.

Luis continued writing his seminal work on the Puerto Rican Civil Code and began to focus on educating the next generation of lawyers. From 1932 to 1941, Luis served as dean of the University of Puerto Rico Law School. He published a monthly magazine, *Mundo Libre*, from 1943 to 1945, and kept writing and publishing books until he passed away on May 14, 1950, in San Juan.

The U.S. Census Bureau is grateful for Luis’ contributions to its mission, Puerto Rico, and the United States.